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RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0094  
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1726  
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0687  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 000418

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SUBJECT: NIGERIA - GUINEA-BISSAU: FONMIN DISCUSSES ECOWAS  
ASSESSMENT TRIP TO BISSAU

Classified By: Ambassador Robin R. Sanders for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) During the course of Ambassador's discussions with Nigerian Foreign Minister Maduekwe on AMISOM March 8, he debriefed her on his recent assessment trip to Guinea-Bissau (GB) representing President Yar'Adua as Chairman of ECOWAS. Maduekwe returned from GB on March 6, and departed again the afternoon of March 10 for a second mission to the troubled nation. Overall the Nigerian FonMin made the following points on the situation on the ground and the prelude to the assassination of GB President Vieira.

¶2. (C) Maduekwe told the Ambassador that back in December 2008 at the ECOWAS Summit, where Nigeria assumed the ECOWAS chairmanship, the late GB president told Yar'Adua that he feared for his life. Vieira reportedly told the GON Head of State that he was worried that the late GB Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) would try to assassinate him. He reportedly said that his negative relationship with his CDS (which was common knowledge) had deteriorated to such a point over the country's security situation, particularly on drug trafficking, that he feared for his life. Maduekwe claims that Vieira asked the GON for assistance with his personal protection, which Nigeria was still considering at the time of the GB President's death.

¶3. (C) Regarding highlights of the recent ECOWAS assessment visit, Maduekwe said that he, along with the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Angola, Burkina Faso, ECOWAS Chairman Chambas, and the Foreign Minister of Senegal, to name a few, attended the swearing in of the Speaker of the House as the interim President; met with the Minister of Defense but not the Service Chiefs; and had the opportunity to see the remnants of the bomb -- made in Thailand -- that killed Vieira. They also went to the sites of both assassinations -- Vieira's and the Bissauan CDS. He added that the ECOWAS team also visited Vieira's widow who was staying in the Angolan Embassy as a safe haven as Vieira had sent her there for protection the day before his assassination as, according to Maduekwe, she said he knew the end was near.

¶4. (C) The Ambassador asked Maduekwe what he viewed as next steps. He said that he was quite worried about not having elections in 60 days given that the atmosphere in GB is ripe for narco-traffickers to take advantage of the political vacuum. Maduekwe, admitting that he had no proof, but said

that there was a part of him that believed that Vieira and his CDS had been played against each other by narco-traffickers who could have orchestrated both killings in order to ensure that GB ended up with a head of state that was under their control. In addition, he said there were major rifts with in the military from what he could see between the Minister of Defense and old-line generals on one side, and the Service Chiefs on the other side. He, as well as other members of the ECOWAS assessment team, were disappointed not to be allowed to meet with the Service Chiefs. The Nigerian Foreign Minister also lamented that the crime scene and evidence for both Vieira and the GB CDS had been badly contaminated, and he did not believe that anything would come out of the investigation of the two killings.

15. (C) Maduekwe said that in his conversation with the new interim president (former speaker of the GB house) that the later was hoping for as much international support as possible in order to hold elections, and that GB was looking for Nigerian leadership to help GB out through this difficult time. Ambassador underscored our very real concern about the rise of narco-trafficking in GB and that certainly a political vacuum could make it worse. On a closing note Maduekwe said that in a recent conversation with his counterpart in Equatorial Guinea (EG) on the February 2009 attempt to destabilize the EG government, the EG Foreign Minister asked Nigeria to be more of a leader in the region on controlling small arms and narco-trafficking. Despite Nigeria's views to the contrary, Maduekwe noted, the EG government believes that Nigerian narco-traffickers and militants are trying to destabilize EG so that it can serve

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as a based to bring in weapons to the Niger Delta or more drugs into the West African region.  
SANDERS